

PTS STRATEGIC PLAN

2014-2016

INTRODUCTION

January 2014

It is with great pride and pleasure that the PTS Board of Directors presents you with this strategic plan.

In the past year, PTS volunteers, staff, the Board of Directors, and the Executive Director have all worked diligently to meet the needs of our community. We proudly look forward to our upcoming 30th anniversary highlighted by the evolution of programs and culture of the organization.

While PTS has been evolving as an agency, so too has the Queer landscape in Ottawa. Reflection on our purpose and values has always framed our strategic planning process and we have continued that tradition as the inspiration for this plan.

Through a community-wide consultation commencing in the beginning of March 2013, we engaged with our primary stakeholder groups. With their feedback and guidance, we have developed this three-year strategic plan, with a focus on capacity building, community engagement, and increased development of services.

A further intention of this planning process was to reflect upon our existing mission, vision, and values. With direction from stakeholders, our guiding principles have been refined, expanded and improved.

As we continue to build support for an ever diversifying community, we recognize the words we use are not always received in the empowering and supportive way they are intended. We will therefore strive to engage specific segments of our community using language that is affirmative for who they are, their experiences and history while utilizing umbrella terminology whenever possible.

Our strategic planning process also identified many new and exciting opportunities for PTS. Many stakeholders indicated a need for PTS to focus its efforts on providing up-to-date resources and community information, providing a high quality meeting space for community groups, and championing the well-being of all Queer people. The most frequently cited needs emphasized supporting the trans community, seniors, and the youth in our community. Other areas of focus included improving services to people of colour, rural community members and Queer parents.

Through this plan, PTS seeks to continue providing the essential services that our community has come to expect, and to add to those, new services to continue meeting community needs and priorities. Within the next three years, we will work toward our vision of empowering our vibrant and diverse community.

OUR MISSION

As a centre for Ottawa's Queer community, PTS serves a vibrant, diverse and evolving population and community through support, education and advocacy services. We strive in our work to empower all Queer people in Ottawa and surrounding areas, and to promote their health and well-being

OUR VISION

We are a champion for social change and social justice, embracing our community's past while working towards a bright future for all. Through our commitment to community development and celebrating diversity, PTS provides meaningful support services, actively educates in the greater Ottawa area about Queer issues, and advocates for fair and equal rights for everyone.

PTS IN THREE YEARS

In three years PTS will continue to be a community leader by working towards the following goals:

- We will expand our volunteer capacity of dedicated persons, active in PTS and working within the agency to deliver the services needed in our community.
- We will place a focus on diversifying our revenue streams to meet the growing needs of our community.
- PTS needs dedicated, steady hands at the helm; with that in mind, we will work towards employing additional staff to address the needs of volunteer and program management, event and fundraising coordination, and in-house community counseling. With additional staff dedicated to delivering PTS services and administering agency resources, time, and effort, PTS will be able to extend its energy into the community and address the priorities the community has set forth.
- Education is a vital part of the work PTS does. As such, we will solidify PTS's reputation as the recognized centre for accessing Queer resources and community information, and enhance our own capacities in being that centre.
- Advocacy plays a pivotal role in our community's growth, history, and development. PTS will establish itself as a pre-eminent commentator on Queer issues in public life, the media, and the community.

OUR VALUES

We strive to create and maintain a positive and empowering atmosphere

The nature of what we do is inherently supportive of people; the space we create as a community at PTS is one where both communication and action bear in mind the need for a strong and cooperative spirit. By helping to empower people through their unique strengths and by promoting a positive attitude, we hope to help each and every person coming through our doors along their personal journey.

We aim to provide services that are inclusive, and to be an approachable source for support

Our feelings about serving clients is that everyone who comes to us for help deserves to get that help. Through our training, our open minds, and our diverse group of staff and volunteers, we provide support to all who come to us, regardless of who they are or where they're from.

We recognize and support persons striving to overcome intersecting oppressions

All people are multi-faceted, and many suffer oppression from several angles. We at PTS seek to challenge the causes of oppression and helping people in their struggles with these disparities. We root our services in the idea of strength through diversity. Whatever the intersections of oppression – the crossing of multiple factors causing people's marginalization – we strive to remedy the causes and serve the people affected.

We support people's desires to educate themselves and others

Knowledge is power, and we support people's desire to empower themselves; as well, we encourage and support them in sharing what they've learned to help others.

We exemplify a judgment-free zone at PTS

We acknowledge that personal judgment is a part of the human condition; we provide a community space where that judgment will not affect the way people are treated, looked-upon, or served. We support people in keeping their personal judgment personal.

We are sex-positive, and support all people in exploring and expressing their sexualities

Sexuality is another part of the human condition, and we support all people who strive to find healthy, pleasurable outlets for their sexuality. We actively promote safer sexuality and being informed to make choices, and we encourage any person uncertain about any facet of sex and sexuality to ask questions and seek answers.

OUR ORIGINS

In January of 1984, the Gays of Ottawa (GO), an organization working towards equal rights and fair treatment for Ottawa's gay and lesbian community, had reached a pivotal point. GO's primary focus had become political activism, advocacy and action; its charitable activities, serving the community it represented, had taken a secondary role. Thus, the directors of GO established an organization with charitable goals, intended to serve the community as a service provider: PTS.

The social conditions of 1984 in the greater Ottawa area were such that identifying as gay or lesbian was a social taboo—and significantly further marginalizing to identify as bisexual, transsexual, transgender, two-spirit or queer. There was an evident need for a safe space where the community could find opportunities to network, access resources and connect with supports.

In March 1984, PTS was granted status as a registered charity under the Income Tax Act, the first organization openly serving gays and lesbians to be granted that status in Canada. This allowed PTS to collect funds as a recognized charitable organization, providing much-needed resources, support lines and discussion groups for the gay and lesbian community.

When PTS first began, it focused mainly on issues related to homosexuality; its services included providing the community with information about counseling as well as sponsoring and conducting research. In the time since, PTS has expanded to working with people who identify anywhere along the spectra of gender identity, gender expression or sexual orientation, advocating for their needs and aiming to bring together the Queer community to celebrate its own diversity.

As we approach our 30th anniversary, we are evolving with our community and coming to a new understanding of ourselves and our growing diversity. While we embrace our community's history, we are moving forward together, as a Queer community; to transform societal beliefs and practices in order to liberate our lives.

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

1

Enhance PTS' role as the centre in Ottawa for queer resources, community information and support.

Building upon the achievements of the 2010-2012 plan, PTS will continue to build upon its quality services for the Queer community. Our stakeholders have shown great interest in a community based health clinic, community kitchen/food security for queer people, queer immigrant settlement services and support services for rural community members.

In addition to the under-serviced populations previously identified (women, transsexual, transgender and genderqueer people, youth), programming will be created for: Seniors, Queer Parents, Queer Persons of Colour.

We see all around us what happens when youth and seniors lose contact with each other. As queer people, we are even more vulnerable to the negative effects of this separation. As community cannot be built without youth and seniors together, PTS will develop all-ages/integrated programming.

We recognize that the term queer can be barrier for some seniors and community members. For that reason, when communicating with them directly, we will use alternate language such as "GLBTTQ".

2

Continue to strengthen PTS corporate profile through visibility initiatives, community engagement and increased participation in community events.

PTS knows the importance of working with community partners and will continue to ensure representation on community networks, info fairs, and events both in the Queer community and in the larger Ottawa community where the interests of Queer people need to be represented.

We will enhance its relationships with fellow service providers and with political representatives through our education program by offering diversity workshops and consultations. Our educational service has proven to be a great tool for forming lasting relationships with other organizations and individuals in the greater Ottawa area.

As a new extension to our education programs, PTS will seek to establish an accreditation program to create a standard for culturally appropriate services available to Queer people.

Using traditional and unorthodox mediums, we will enhance the visibility of the agency through a mixture of new media (online presence), conventional publicity (flags/signs), and tried-and-true grassroots initiatives.

<p>3</p>	<p><i>Continue capacity building through improved volunteer engagement, retention and appreciation.</i></p>	<p>PTS will enhance its volunteer core while keeping the entire volunteer body active and growing. By recognizing the need for engagement and appreciation to volunteers, and committing to an effective and meaningful volunteer appreciation initiative, PTS aims to be recognized as a leader in volunteer satisfaction and retention by bodies like Volunteer Ottawa.</p>
<p>4</p>	<p><i>Enhance the quality of space at PTS to support our growing programs</i></p>	<p>We constantly seek to improve the level of services we deliver to the Queer community. PTS will continue to improve the quality of meeting rooms and casual areas through leasehold improvements. With the improvement in space will come continued enhancements in computer technology and internet access, both for clients and for volunteers.</p>
<p>5</p>	<p>Continue to diversify revenue streams earmarked for general (core) funds.</p>	<p>By revitalizing and diversifying our revenue strategies, PTS will offset the cost of programming and increase core revenue, while at the same time implementing a value-added membership program to encourage greater involvement and engagement from the community with PTS.</p> <p>We will continue to partner with other service providers in select fundraising events/campaigns, and its resource directory will continue to provide a service for businesses and community groups interested in increasing their visibility.</p> <p>PTS has much experience fundraising with and for Queer people, but it has more to learn and experience to share. PTS will join Imagine Canada (“a national charitable organization whose cause is Canada’s charities and nonprofits”) to learn and to share.</p>
<p>6</p>	<p>Improve the corporate culture at PTS to create a more cohesive relationship between our values and our governing documents</p>	<p>A strong organization is one with a cohesive relationship between its bylaws, mandate, values and policies. PTS will reflect on its policies and culture and strive to balance the organization with our values.</p> <p>We will find balance with our values by expanding upon the languages we use to deliver services, by pursuing a legal name change and update our letters patent (legal registration with Industry Canada) to reflect our current values, practices and politics and honour our 30 year evolution.</p>

STRATEGIC PRIORITY#1

Enhance PTS' role as the centre in Ottawa for queer resources, community information and support.

	Actions
	Obtain Health Service Organization designation to further our mandate in providing health and wellness to the Queer community.
	Connect with immigrant and newcomer organizations and community members to guide the development of immigration/settlement services which might include language training services.
	Develop creative and cost-effective programming to engage with rural community members
	Develop a Queer parenting/daycare program
	Introduce a fully functional kitchen to support a community-based food security program.
	-improve online presence by updating our website and maximizing SEO (search engine optimization) through a scan and update of organizations/resources listing PTS
	-Develop services that are supportive and empowering to the senior GLBTQ community in Ottawa
	-Enhance the quality of our resource directory and community calendar

STRATEGIC PRIORITY#2

Continue to strengthen PTS corporate profile through visibility initiatives, community engagement and increased participation in community events.

	Actions
	-establish a volunteer group to ensure PTS is present at community network meetings, community events/info fairs
	-develop an integrated awareness campaign using traditional advertising mediums, viral marketing and grassroots initiatives (parliament kiss-in, flash mob, etc...)
	-establish street level visibility with flags and/or signs
	-maintain and improve our diversity workshops and consultation program
	-develop an accreditation program to enhance our diversity training
	-strategically represent PTS at meetings and events/info fairs for the Ottawa community at large

STRATEGIC PRIORITY#3

Continue capacity building through improved volunteer engagement, retention and appreciation.

Timeline	Actions
	-enhance the infrastructure needed to support a large volunteer corps (200-250 active volunteers)
	-implement a volunteer appreciation program to include regular social opportunities for volunteer mingling, a formal volunteer appreciation party and volunteer of the month
	-improve volunteer training on the intersecting oppressions and social justice
	-become recognized as a leader in volunteer satisfaction by Volunteer Ottawa and other similar bodies

STRATEGIC PRIORITY#4

Enhance the quality of space at PTS and the quality of our existing programs and add new programming as needed.

	Actions
	-improve quality of computer technology and access to internet for clients and volunteers
	-improve quality of meeting/lounge space through leasehold improvements

STRATEGIC PRIORITY#5

Continue to diversify revenue streams earmarked for general (core) funds.

	Actions
	-pursue corporate sponsorships -establish a corporate sponsorship package
	-implement a highly valued membership program -contact community businesses for involvement in adding value to PTS membership (i.e., PTS members receive a discount for product/service purchase)
	-develop and participate in partnership fundraising events

STRATEGIC PRIORITY#6

Improve the corporate culture at PTS to create a more cohesive relationship between our values and our governing documents

	Actions
	-consult with the Ottawa Queer community to consider possible changes to the legal name of the organization
	-update letters patent to better reflect the current language of the organization
	-implement programming that includes other languages